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TAGS: SCUL FR UNESCO

SUBJECT: USUNESCO: GENERAL INFORMATION MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST DOPING IN SPORTS

11. SUMMARY: UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL MATSUURA ANTICIPATES THAT THE ANTI-DOPING CONVENTION WILL BE IN FORCE BY MAY 2006. UNESCO IS PREPARING A NEW COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION PROGRAM AIMED AT WORLD YOUTH TO HIGHLIGHT THE DANGERS OF DRUG DOPING IN SPORT. MATSUURA BELIEVES THE CONVENTION WILL FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION ON UNESCO AND WILL DEMONSTRATE UNESCO'S RELEVANCE AND ABILITY TO ADAPT TO THE WORLD'S CHANGING NEEDS. END SUMMARY.

12. UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL MATSUURA SPOKE THIS PAST FRIDAY MORNING, 24 MARCH 2006, TO A GENERAL INFORMATION MEETING ON THE RATIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST DOPING IN SPORTS AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS WHICH WAS ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS AT UNESCO'S 2005 GENERAL CONFERENCE. HAVING BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ENSURING THAT KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CONVENTION ARE ACCEPTABLE TO US, THE U.S. WAS ABLE TO JOIN THE CONSENSUS.

13. DG MATSUURA ANNOUNCED THAT 10 COUNTRIES HAD ALREADY RATIFIED THE CONVENTION (SWEDEN, CANADA, DENMARK, NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY, AUSTRALIA, MONACO, ICELAND, THE COOK ISLANDS, AND NIGERIA). HE ANTICIPATES THAT RATIFICATION BY THE 30 COUNTRIES NEEDED TO BRING THE CONVENTION INTO FORCE WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY MAY 2006. THE CONVENTION BECOMES INTERNATIONAL LAW ONE MONTH AFTER 30 COUNTRIES HAVE RATIFIED THE AGREEMENT.

14. MATSUURA ANTICIPATES THE CONVENTION WILL BE IN FORCE PRIOR TO THE START OF SOCCER'S WORLD CUP, BEING HELD IN GERMANY FROM 9 JUNE TO 9 JULY. MATSUURA WILL BE ATTENDING A SEMI-FINAL GAME, AND INTENDS TO USE THE VISIT TO COMMUNICATE ON UNESCO'S ROLE IN ANTI-DOPING. HE STRESSED HIS DESIRE THAT MEMBER STATES TAKE STEPS TO PUT THE CONVENTION INTO EFFECT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

15. THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR INTERVENED AND MENTIONED THAT THE RATIFICATION PROCESS IN GERMANY IS A SLOW ONE, REQUIRING THE CONSENT OF 16 STATES, AND THE NEED TO TRANSLATE THE CONVENTION DOCUMENT INTO A STANDARD GERMAN THAT WILL BE LEGALLY ACCEPTABLE GIVEN THE REGIONAL VARIATIONS OF THE LANGUAGE.

16. THE ISSUE OF THE TIMING OF MEMBER STATE'S RATIFICATION IS IMPORTANT AS ONLY THOSE MEMBER STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED THE CONVENTION THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PARTIES MAY PARTICIPATE. THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF PARTIES MEETING, WHICH TAKES PLACE ONCE EVERY TWO YEARS, IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR 20-21 JULY AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS. IT WILL BE AT THIS MEETING THAT THE BASIC RULES OF THE ROAD REGARDING THE CONVENTION'S ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE SET. AMONG THE PRINCIPAL ACTIONS TAKEN WILL ALSO BE THE ADOPTION OF THE LIST OF PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES FOR THE YEAR 2006.

17. MATSUURA ANNOUNCED THAT UNESCO WILL UNDERTAKE A MAJOR COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN REGARDING THE CONVENTION TO PROMOTE ANTI-DOPING EDUCATION AND INCREASE AWARENESS OF SUCH ISSUES AS SPORTS ETHICS, EQUITABLE COMPETITION, AND FAIR PLAY. A NEW WEB SITE WILL BE CREATED TO COMMUNICATE THE MESSAGE WORLDWIDE WITH SPECIFIC ATTENTION TO PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN. MATSUURA ALSO MENTIONED THAT A SPORTS CHAMPION WILL BE RECRUITED TO PROMOTE THE PROGRAM.

oliver